

Police dog takes his final bows

Bax sworn in to replace retiring Bob

By John Chaffee
The Patriot Ledger

DUXBURY — In a formal outdoor ceremony overlooking Duxbury Bay, the police department yesterday marked a changing of the guard.

After what Chief Charles Mazzone termed nine years of "loyal and dedicated service," K-9 Bob was retired and replaced by K-9 Bax.

"This is a very proud but somewhat somber moment," Mazzone said as the two German shepherd police dogs lay at the feet of their partners — Bob by Lt. Susan James and Bax by Officer Timothy Wigmore.

Capt. James Ballinger of the Plymouth County Sheriff's Department, who helped select and train both dogs, said James, while still a patrol officer, initiated Duxbury's police dog program 10 years ago.

She went on to become one of the first female dog partners to compete in an international police dog competition, Ballinger said.

For three years in a row, Bob was the third highest ranking police dog in the United States.

Standing under white pines at Bumpus Park across from the King Caesar House on

Duxbury

Powder Point, James paid tribute to her longtime partner.

"I recently read that dogs invented unconditional love," she said.

Then she told how a well-trained police dog not only provides increased safety for a patrol officer but helps solve crimes as well, by sniffing out drugs or explosives or by tracking criminals or lost persons.

Mazzone presented James with a plaque paying tribute to Bob as the town's first police dog.

He then raised his right hand and swore in Bax as Bob's successor.

"Bax will affix his paw print to this oath," Mazzone said.

A medallion on a ribbon was taken from Bob by James and placed around Bax's head to signify the changeover.

Bob, a native of Germany who will turn 14 in September, will live in retirement with James.

Bax, who was born in Slovakia two years ago in August, will live at home with Wigmore, his wife and two children.



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Duxbury police dog Bob was retired yesterday in a ceremony overlooking Duxbury Bay.